

Message Text

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ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ISO-00 MC-02 SS-15 L-03 NSC-10

AID-20 IGA-02 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 EB-11

DODE-00 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 DRC-01 /119 W

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R 261535Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 993

INFO AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 10248

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI PFOR IT LY

SUBJECT: ITALIAN SALE OF ADDITIONAL M-113 APC'S TO LIBYA

REF: A. STATE 189530; B. ROME 2781; C. TRIPOLI 1186

1. EMBASSY APPRECIATES FINAL SENTENCE (REF A) THAT USG APPROVAL OF SALE OF ADDITIONAL ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS TO LIBYA IS NECESSARY AND HAS NOT YET BEEN GIVEN.

2. IN PREVIOUS CASES INVOLVING USG APPROVAL FOR THIRD-COUNTRY SALES, IT HAS NOT BEEN UNUSUAL FOR ITALIAN MANUFACTURING FIRMS TO SIGN CONTRACTS BEFORE APPROVAL WAS GRANTED. SUCH A PROCEDURE, OF COURSE, HAS THE ADVANTAGE FOR THE ITALIANS THAT IT DEMONSTRATES THEIR OWN DESIRE TO PROCEED WITH TRANSACTION. NEVERTHELESS, THE CONTRACTS HAVE NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED UNTIL USG APPROVAL WAS FORTHCOMING.

3. WE HAVE HEARD NOTHING FROM GOI ON THIS SUBJECT SINCE THEIR FORMAL REQUEST LAST APRIL (REF B). IN THIS CONNECTION, WE NOTE STATEMENT OF ITALIAN AMBASSADOR MAROTTA (REF C) THAT GOI WAS DELIBERATELY "GOING SLOW" IN MEETING LIBYAN DESIRE TO PURCHASE ADDITIONAL APC'S.

4. HOWEVER, DESPITE THIS AND DESPITE DEPARTURE OF ANDREOTTI-
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WHO HAD STRONG INTEREST IN SUCH SALES-FROM GOVERNMENT, WE

CANNOT RULE OUT A RENEWED ITALIAN APPROACH. DEFENSE MINISTER
TANASSI'S UPCOMING VISIT TO THE US WOULD PROVIDE THE GOI
WITH A LOGICAL OPPORTUNITY. VOLPE

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